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LAND OF THE ESKIMOS

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Of the six countries whose coasts thrust
into the north polar seas, Canada is re-
sponsible for the administration of 37 per
cent of the world's Arctic regions.

The geographical size of Canada's
north is almost incomprehensibly large.
Few Europeans know of Baffin Island yet
it is larger than Sweden. Belgium could
fit as an island into sprawling Great Bear
Lake, while the Yukon, smaller of the
north's administrative districts, almost
equals continental France in size. If you
move across Canada from east to west,
you will have travelled 3,500 miles; the
distance between southern Ontario and
the northern tip of the Arctic's Ellesmere
Island is 2,800 miles.

Canada's north country is made up of
the Yukon Territory, a separate territory
of 207,000 square miles occupying the
north-western corner of Canada, and the
Northwest Territories, covering 1,300,000
square miles generally north of the 60th
parallel of north latitude. Canada's total
northern population at present is 31,503,
of whom 19,312 live in the N.W.T. and
12,190 in the Yukon.

The North's people live in a variety
of regions, each differing from the other
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LAND OF THE ESKIMOS

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Most lands tell their stories through their peoples, but the Canadian North has almost overpowered its population by its immensity. When the North speaks, its voice is the thunder of rockfalls from lofty peaks, the bubbling roar of rapids on great rivers, the groans of vast seas of ice, even the silence of the central tundra; a quiet almost total. Though the Eskimos of Canada express their native land and their life in artistic carvings and strangely beautiful songs, the people of the North have remained largely inarticulate, letting their country testify alone of its greatness, its resources of minerals, and its destiny as a vital future part of the world community.

Canada's North has much to tell the people of the world. It has great stores of gold, lead, zinc, nickel, copper, uranium, silver, lithium, iron ore, and oil and natural gas awaiting development. The three great geological regions of Canada extend into its vastness, the two metal-bearing formations on its eastern and western borders, and the petroleum rich Plains formation in its centre. The North shares with the southern part of Canada those great mineral resources which have made Canada the source of 90 per cent of the free world's nickel, half its platinum and two-thirds its asbestos, and the world's second leading producer of gold and aluminum.

At a time when world demand for metals is increasing and reserves in established sources of supply dwindling, the North of Canada rises in strategic im-

portance. Here are the largest undeveloped areas of Canada, itself the second largest country in the world. Forty per cent of Canada's land area is made up of the 1,500,000 square miles of northern Canada that taper toward the North Pole. Of the six countries whose coasts thrust into the north polar seas, Canada is responsible for the administration of 37 per cent of the world's Arctic regions.

The geographical size of Canada's north is almost incomprehensibly large. Few Europeans know of Baffin Island yet it is larger than Sweden. Belgium could fit as an island into sprawling Great Bear Lake, while the Yukon, smaller of the north's administrative districts, almost equals continental France in size. If you move across Canada from east to west, you will have travelled 3,500 miles; the distance between southern Ontario and the northern tip of the Arctic's Ellesmere Island is 2,800 miles.

Canada's north country is made up of the Yukon Territory, a separate territory of 207,000 square miles occupying the north-western corner of Canada, and the Northwest Territories, covering 1,300,000 square miles generally north of the 60th parallel of north latitude. Canada's total northern population at present is 31,503, of whom 19,312 live in the N.W.T. and 12,190 in the Yukon.

The North's people live in a variety of regions, each differing from the other in topography and climate. The Yukon is a land of mountains, deep river valleys, and plateaus, well served with transpor-

tation and the least sparsely populated of the northern area. Gold, which opened the Yukon to settlement, is still produced and great resources of lead, zinc, and silver are being developed. Copper, nickel, and probably oil provide the potential for further mineral development. In addition to its ores, the Yukon has limited patches of land suitable for timber operations or agriculture.

The Mackenzie River Valley, the western part of the Northwest Territories, also is rich in minerals. Port Radium on the shore of Great Bear Lake has made Canada one of the greatest world producers of uranium, while three gold mines are in steady production. Oil, base metals, and lithium deposits are being developed and exploration is being carried out energetically on the site of what may be the greatest lead-zinc deposit on the North American Continent. Further investigation of the Mackenzie Valley's mineral wealth may establish that the northern part of the Canadian Shield can yield as much mineral wealth as the southern part, in which the great mines of Ontario and Quebec are located.

Even the North's remaining region, that assembly of Arctic islands which extend to the fringe of the North Pole, holds promise of mineral wealth. In this part of the North, which is the real Arctic of ice and snow, deposits of nickel and iron ore have attracted interest.

The remoteness of northern Canada has been the greatest deterrent to its development. In the southern parts of Canada transportation has conquered distance, but in the North it has not developed to the stage at which the needs of settlement and economic development can be served efficiently. Highway and water transportation, the latter primarily along the 2,500-mile route of the Mackenzie River, are the main carriers. Air transportation has provided an invaluable



-N.F.B.

Eskimo Women

means of travel between the North and the southern centres of population and played an important part in the discovery of the North's mineral wealth.

Railways such as those that opened up the prairies of Western Canada in the nineteenth century can help open up the North today but the building of such railroads is linked to the rate of natural resources development. There is a 110-mile railway in the Yukon but the railway building era of the Northwest Territories is still of the future. Railways can do much to decrease the high costs of transportation into the North, costs that reflect in the wages of northern workers as well as in the expenditure for heavy equipment and maintenance. High transportation costs have not directly hindered the settlement of the North, for they are compensated by higher wages and special living allowances, but they have slowed capital investment of the magnitude required to develop and economically produce minerals.

The North's population does not match its size and economic potential. The Canadian population clusters around the nation's southern areas, which, at their extreme southern points, are nearer the Equator than the Italian Riviera. Eighty per cent of the people live within 200 miles of the border between Canada and the United States; only one of every 500 Canadians lives in the lands lying north of the provinces.

Until recently there has been a lack of interest in northern development. Explorers, traders, whalers, and missionaries have visited the Arctic for nearly 400 years but Canadians have been too preoccupied with other responsibilities to consider their northland. It was only in 1867 that Canada became a country and, for 37 years after that, all the resources and strength of the Canadian people were spent on developing the plains of the West and linking the lands from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans in an unified, strong nation. No sooner had this been done than the Great War imposed new sacrifices on the Canadian people. With the war and the reconstruction period over, the economy of Canada was battered by the waves of successive economic depressions, which allowed no respite for even thought of the North. Another war followed in the van of the depressed business conditions and it has been only since 1945 that Canada has been economically capable of assuming the massive task of northern development.

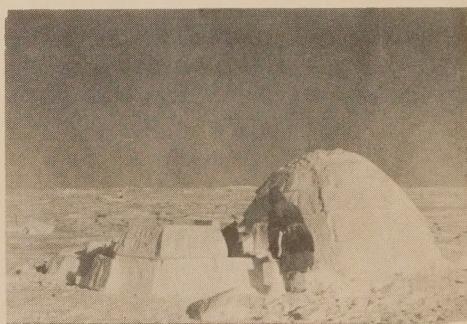
In undertaking the development of its north country, Canada has relied on the initiative of her people. No incentives other than the natural incentives of the northland itself are offered those who would develop the Canadian North into a productive part of the nation. Those men who are drawn by the immense possibilities of the North can find encouragement from

the Eskimos, the most northerly people of Canada.

The economy of the Eskimos, like that of the North itself, is still primitive but is undergoing a transition. For more than 2,000 years the Eskimos have lived off the land, relying on hunting and fishing for their food and clothing. Commerce with the white men did not develop until the early years of this century when trading posts were established in the Arctic. Trade goods, offered in exchange for raw furs, interested the Eskimos in trapping, and the white pelt of the Arctic fox soon became an accepted medium of exchange for such luxuries as woollen cloth, tea and tobacco.

An economy based on the animals of the land and the creatures of the sea is precarious; when hunting was poor, or the market for furs depressed, living was hard and the Eskimo suffered. The introduction of the rifle provided a greater drain on the wildlife resources. To improve the Eskimo economy and eliminate the insecurity of their daily life, the Canadian Government has helped these northern citizens in many ways.

To improve their health, medical services are provided. Monthly allowances for Eskimo children are paid in the form of nutritious, supplementary foods, clothing, and small household articles.



-N.F.B.

Eskimo building an Igloo

Education at the lower level is directed toward raising the health standards of the Eskimos and improving the skills vital in their native way of life. Education at the higher level includes vocational training, which will train the Eskimos in trades and skills useful in the growing development of the North.

To widen and diversify the Eskimo economy, new projects are being started. The bone, ivory, and rock carvings which the Eskimo create for their personal satisfaction are now in wide demand both in Canada and abroad. Boat-building is being undertaken successfully while a number of Eskimos obtain employment on Arctic construction projects. The possibility of introducing domesticated and semi-domesticated animals to the Arctic to provide food and revenue for the Eskimo is being studied.



-N.F.B.

Eskimo in a Kayak

As their natural intelligence and ingenuity is applied to technical skills, the Eskimos of Canada, with their particular aptitudes for living under conditions inhospitable to the inexperienced outsider, are assisting in opening up one of the world's last great frontiers.



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